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ABSTRACT

This guide to policy concerning parent involvement in Kentucky's Chapter 1 programs was prepared in an effort to help local districts develop a policy that complies with state legislation. While the parameters of Kentucky's P.L. 100-297 are clear, the procedures for preparing a parent participation policy are complicated. The guide includes an introductory component that centers on the creation of a strong parent-school partnership, and seven additional components that cover: (1) the process of informing the parent of a child's choice to participate in Chapter 1; (2) annual meetings of parents of participating children; (3) parent-instructional staff communication; (4) training in Chapter 1 parent involvement for teachers, assistants, principals, and other program staff; (5) parent training and support; (6) coordination of the Chapter 1 program with activities funded under the adult education act; and (7) end-of-year assessment. A sample parent involvement policy is provided. (RH)

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KENTUCKY CHAPTER 1

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

GUIDE

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Division of Compensatory Education
Kentucky Department of Education
Frankfort, Kentucky

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CHAPTER 1 PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY GUIDE

P.L. 100-297 requires local districts and state agencies to include parents of participating children in several new initiatives. One section of the Act requires local districts to develop and adopt a Parent Involvement Policy. Although the parameters of the Act are clear, the procedures for preparing such a policy are complicated. This Parent Involvement Policy Guide was prepared to assist local districts in developing a viable Parent Involvement Policy that complies with the law.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY MEETINGS

The content of parent involvement meetings focuses on ways to achieve the goals for parent involvement and to implement the specific activities noted in the regulations.

The meaningful participation of parents in the design of this policy will be gained by notifying parents of the purpose and importance of these meetings in the most effective ways practicable which ensure the full participation of parents who lack literacy skills or whose native language is not English. This notification should be given through a -

- letter sent directly to the parent's home address; and/or
- letter sent to parents by student with a return signature requested; and/or
- letter sent to parents with follow-up telephone call; and/or
- telephone call to each parent; and/or
- visit to the home of each parent.

To formalize the commitment to a strong parent-school partnership and to ensure an organized, systematic, ongoing, informed and timely program, the following parent policy should be the result of Chapter 1 program staff -

- meeting with parents of all participating Chapter 1 students; and/or
- meeting with parents of participating Chapter 1 students in each eligible Chapter 1 school; and/or
- meeting with parents of participating Chapter 1 students who have been elected to represent all of the Chapter 1 parents from a particular group or school.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY OUTLINE

The following information--presented in outline form with illustrations and comments on the law and regulations--is meant to serve a dual purpose. While listing content areas required in a parent involvement policy, it also serves as a guide to the process of developing the policy. Thus, a parent involvement policy should include the following:

I. Introduction (Optional)

In recognition that the parent is the child's first and most important teacher, and that the parent's continued involvement is essential for the success of the child, the Board of Education is committed to building a strong parent-school partnership.

II. Informing Parent of Child's Selection to Participate in Chapter 1 (Required)

At the beginning of the school year, the parents of each student selected to receive Chapter 1 services will be notified as to the reasons their child was selected. This notification will include the instructional objectives and methods of the Chapter 1 program and a copy of the parent involvement policy. (The process by which the parent involvement policy is disseminated is optional as long as the parents receive a copy at the beginning of the school year.) This notification and explanation will be provided in the most effective ways practicable which ensure the full participation of parents who lack literacy skills or whose native language is not English. This notification will be given through a -

- letter sent directly to the parent's home address; and/or
- letter sent to the parents by student with return signature requested; and/or
- letter sent to parents with follow-up telephone call; and/or
- telephone call to each parent; and/or
- visit to the home of each parent.

This notification process will be repeated each time a student is added to the Chapter 1 program.

III. Annual Meeting (Required)

Following the selection of the students who may receive Chapter 1 services and the notification of their parents, the Chapter 1 staff will convene an annual meeting to which the parents of all participating children must be invited.

Parents will be informed as to the variety of allowable costs and activities and the ways the Chapter 1 program can be coordinated with activities funded under the Adult Education Act. The content of this meeting will explain the program and activities provided with Chapter 1 funds and consult with parents concerning the manner in which the school and parents can work together to achieve the program's objectives. This meeting will also serve as part of the comprehensive range of opportunities for parents to become informed, in a timely way, about how the program will be designed, operated, and evaluated, allowing opportunities for parental participation, so that parents and educators can work together to achieve the program's objectives. This meeting will be held districtwide or at the building level.

IV. Parent-Instructional Staff Communication (Required)

[The material that follows is a possible format for parent-instructional staff communication. In some cases, the regulations require action but do not specify who should implement the action. In the format that follows, these responsibilities have been given to the Chapter 1 teacher but could be carried out by other staff.]

Following the assignment of students, the Chapter 1 teachers and instructional assistants will contact the parents of each Chapter 1 student in a timely manner. The purpose of this contact will be:

- to make parents aware of the importance of parental involvement requirements, other relevant provisions of the program and to express an interest in ongoing input from the parents concerning the manner in which the school and parents can work better together to achieve the program's objectives;
- to provide accessibility for parents to teachers, Chapter 1 staff and other educational personnel. The work schedules and the best methods to contact these educators will be shared;
- to welcome parents to observe the Chapter 1 program activities;
- to establish a time to conduct a parent-teacher conference to discuss the student's progress, placement, and methods the parents can use to complement the child's instruction;

- to discuss the purpose and ____(number) intervals of the timely progress reports which the parents will be receiving on their child's progress;

- to discuss ways the teacher and other Chapter 1 staff can best provide information, programs, and activities in a language and form the parents can understand;

- to discuss the timely ways in which (specify) the parents of Chapter 1 students will be provided information about the program.

V. Training in Chapter 1 Parent Involvement for Teachers, Assistants, Principals, and Other Program Staff (Required)

A. Appropriate training will be provided to all Chapter 1 staff to increase the effectiveness of the staff in working with the parents of participating Chapter 1 students and the building of a partnership between home and school. This training will be in the form of either/or a combination of workshops, inservices, and a statewide conference.

B. Suggested Implementation: At the beginning (or end) of each school year, input from regular classroom teachers, Chapter 1 teachers, instructional assistants, principals, and other program staff may be solicited concerning the needs of the parent program, the parent support services, and the training for professional staff. The focus of this assessment will be to increase the effectiveness of the staff in working with the parents of participating Chapter 1 students and the building of a partnership between home and school. This input may be used to design a parent involvement program of allowable activities and costs and select the training needed to enhance the effectiveness of the staff implementing the program. Appropriate parent involvement training will be provided to all Chapter 1 district staff. This training will be in the form of either/ or a combination of workshops, inservices, and a statewide conference.

VI. Parent Training and Support (Required)

In order to increase the effectiveness of parents in working with their children in the home to attain the instructional objectives of the Chapter 1 program, to understand the Chapter 1 program requirements and to participate in building a partnership between home and school, support will be given through training and services. Parents will be consulted as to the type and design of the training and services needed.

VII. Coordination of the Chapter 1 Program with Activities Funded Under the Adult Education Act (Required)

The Chapter 1 Program staff will coordinate parent involvement activities with the Adult Education Act where possible during the period following the annual assessment.

VIII. End of Year Assessment (Required)

At the end of each school year, the Chapter 1 staff will meet -

- with the parents of all participating Chapter 1 students; and/or
- with the parents of all participating Chapter 1 students in each eligible Chapter 1 school; and/or
- with the parents of participating Chapter 1 students who have been elected to represent all of the Chapter 1 parents from a particular group or school.

This meeting will serve two purposes. The first will be to assess, with the parents, the effectiveness of the parental involvement program. This will be part of the ongoing consultation with parents concerning the manner in which the school and parents can work better together to achieve the program's objectives. The second purpose, will be to provide a timely way to discuss with parents how the next years program will be designed, operated, and evaluated, allowing opportunities for parental participation, so that parents and educators can work together to achieve the program's objectives. During this section of the meeting, the parents will discuss the opportunities they would prefer for regular parent meetings in which they would formulate input into the program.

SAMPLE

Parent Involvement Policy

In recognition that the parent is the child's first and most important teacher, and that the parent's continued involvement is essential for the success of the child, the _____ Board of Education is committed to building a strong parent-school partnership. To support the parent-school partnership, the following policies were designed with meaningful consultation from the parents of participating Chapter 1 students.

I. At the beginning of the school year, the parents of each student selected to receive Chapter 1 services will be notified as to the reasons their child was selected. This notification will include the instructional objectives and methods of the Chapter 1 program and a copy of the parent involvement policy. The process for notification will ensure the full participation of parents who lack literacy skills or whose native language is not English.

II. Following the selection of the students who may receive Chapter 1 services and the notification of their parents, the Chapter 1 staff will convene an annual meeting to which the parents of all participating children must be invited. The contents of the annual meeting will consist of: _____

_____.

This meeting will be held (districtwide or at the building level).

III. Following the assignment of students, the Chapter 1 teachers and instructional assistants will contact the parents of each Chapter 1 student in a timely manner. The purpose and content of this contact will be: _____

_____.

IV. Appropriate training will be provided to all Chapter 1 staff to increase the effectiveness of the staff in working with the parents of participating Chapter 1 students and the building of a partnership between home and school. This training will be in the form of either/or a combination of workshops, inservices, and a statewide conference.

V. In order to increase the effectiveness of parents in working with their children in the home to attain the instructional objectives of the Chapter 1 program, to understand the Chapter 1 program requirements and to participate in building a partnership between home and school, support will be given through training and services. Parents will be consulted as to the type and design of the training and services needed.

VI. The Chapter 1 program staff will coordinate parent involvement activities with the Adult Education Act where possible during the period following the annual assessment.

VII. At the end of each school year, the Chapter 1 staff will meet with Chapter 1 parents to assess and discuss the effectiveness of the parent involvement program and to discuss how the next year's program will be designed, operated, and evaluated.